

6,189,279). The Applicants have cancelled previously pending claims 1-46 and added new claims 47-72, including new independent claims 47 and 60, and dependent claims 47-59 and 61-72, for a total of 26 claims. Thus, no new claim fees are due.

New claim 47 is directed to a combination packaging and structural system adapted to protect a product during shipment and to be formed into a structural unit. This packaging and structural system includes a plurality of three-dimensional elements. Each of the three-dimensional elements includes a cavity formed therein that is adapted to be removably mated to a portion of the product during shipment of the product. Further, each of the three-dimensional elements includes an interlocking portion that is adapted to interlock with an interlocking portion of another three-dimensional element of the plurality of three-dimensional elements. Finally, the plurality of three-dimensional units are adapted to be interlocked using their interlocking portions to form the structural unit.

The cited prior art references do not fairly teach or suggest the elements of the combination packaging and structural system that are required by new claim 47. New claim 60 requires similar elements but is directed to a system that protects a plurality of products during shipment that is also adapted to be formed into a structural unit. All other claims depend from either claim 47 or claim 60.

Thus, pending claims 47-72 are now allowable. A Notice of Allowance is courteously solicited. Please direct any questions to the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

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